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# Articles in Today's Clips

**Thursday, April 24, 2008**

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

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## Cops: Mom leaves kids in car while playing poker

Thursday, April 24, 2008

By John Agar

The Grand Rapids Press

WYOMING -- Police say a mother left her three children in a car early Wednesday while she played poker at a local bar.

Police were alerted around 1 a.m. that the children, ages 5, 10 and 15, were left in the car. The children were sleeping when officers arrived in the parking lot of Woody's Press Box, 5656 Clyde Park Ave. SW.

It was unclear how long the children were in the car, but Wyoming police Capt. Brad Schutter said it was "a significant period of time."

Police contacted the children's father, who was not at the bar, and he took custody of them.

The 36-year-old Grandville woman's name was withheld pending the possibility of charges. Police said she could face child neglect charges.

The case was turned over to detectives for investigation. Police also contacted protective-services workers, who were expected to investigate. Once the police investigation is complete, reports will be forwarded to Kent County prosecutors to review for possible charges, Schutter said.

Someone called police after spotting the children in the car. Police, who responded at 1:17 a.m., found the children in the car sleeping. Officers went inside the bar and looked for the mother, who was playing Texas Hold 'em.

She offered no explanation for leaving her children in the car, Schutter said.

The poker game was part of a charitable event, police said.

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## Girl found unharmed after wandering off

By ART BUKOWSKI

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TRAVERSE CITY -- Nicole Wade's mind spun with anxiety as she hurried home from work.

Her husband had called to say their daughter, Laurel Wade, 3, disappeared from the family's home on Rennie School Road in Blair Township. Wade, a registered nurse, immediately left work at Munson Medical Center.

"The whole drive home, stuff was going through my head, but I thought for sure that when I pulled in they would have found her and it would have been no big deal," she said.

But Wade's panic worsened when she arrived home and her daughter hadn't returned. Laurel wandered off on the afternoon of April 18 while her father did yard work.

"I no sooner took my eyes off her and boom, she was gone," Mark Wade, 41, said.

After about a half-hour of searching, the family contacted authorities shortly before 7 p.m. A neighbor's familiar dog had appeared in the yard around the time Laurel disappeared, and Mark and Nicole suspected the girl strayed off with the animal.

"She always, always stays in the yard, but she loves dogs," Nicole said.

Nicole remained home as police launched a search. On-duty and off-duty officers, firefighters and nearby citizens turned out to help, Grand Traverse Sheriff Scott Fewins said.

A sheriff's deputy and his tracking dog eventually located Laurel in an overgrown area less than a mile from home, and he found her sitting in mud with the neighbor's dog by her side at about 7:30 p.m.

The deputy could hear Laurel crying, Fewins said.

"My biggest relief was when they said they could hear her," Nicole said. "I knew that if she was talking she was relatively OK."

Fewins said he's glad the deputy located Laurel before nightfall.

"I can't imagine how frightened a little 3-year-old girl would be if it got dark," Fewins said.

The Wades said they're grateful to authorities and others who helped in the search, and they plan to keep a sharper eye on their daughter.

"I know I learned a lesson from this, and I'm hoping that even at 3, she gets a bit of a lesson, too," Mark Wade said.

It was a "good feeling" to see Laurel arrive home safe, Fewins said.

"I could see it in the eyes of the father, he was so thankful everything was going to be fine," he said. "It was a good day

for us."

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## Photos



Mark Wade's 3-year-old daughter Laurel went missing for about 90 minutes last week in the woods off of Rennie School Road. With the help of the sheriff's department and volunteers, Laurel was found unharmed. Record-Eagle

# **Jury deliberations begin in case of mother charged with killing 2-year-old son**

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BY DAN CORTEZ • FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER • APRIL 24, 2008

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Jury deliberations began this afternoon in Macomb County Circuit Court in the case of a Warren mother charged with murder in connection with the 2007 death of her 2-year-old son.

Crystal Conklin, 27, is charged with first-degree murder and first-degree child abuse. Macomb County prosecutors have alleged that Conklin severely beat her son, Sean Sowards, who was found in his own vomit June 11 at the family home on Jarvis Street. He died two days later at a local hospital.

Investigators said the boy had a fractured femur, two missing toe nails and bruises all over his body. Michael Sowards, the boy's father, also has been charged with child abuse in connection with his son's death. His case is separate.

In closing arguments, Macomb County Assistant Prosecutor Therese Tobin said Conklin treated her 4-year-old daughter, Angel, better than her son.

"Sean was the target of the defendant's torture," Tobin said.

Ronald Goldstein, Conklin's lawyer, said some of Sean's injuries were caused by Angel during horseplay.

The case is before Judge John C. Foster.



## Murder suspect Mata said he shook baby 'a little'

Thursday, April 24, 2008

By Barton Deiters

The Grand Rapids Press

GRAND RAPIDS -- It did not take long for Jeffery Mata to change his story when police told him there was no way his girlfriend's daughter could have sustained her injuries simply by being dropped to the floor.

A Kent County Circuit Court jury heard Wednesday the recording of Grand Rapids Detective Dan Adams challenging Mata's version of events hours after 8-month-old Lucretia Teunis was taken to Spectrum Health Butterworth Hospital. She later died from a traumatic head injury, also known as shaken baby syndrome.

Mata is on trial, charged with felony murder, which carries a mandatory penalty of life in prison without parole.

The half-hour police interview was made July 9, 2007, at the home Mata shared with his girlfriend of four months, Jennifer Teunis. It starts with Mata saying he was baby-sitting the girl, her 5-year-old brother and his own 3-year-old son when he heard a thump and went to find the baby breathing strangely.

In the second version, Mata said he dropped Lucretia, who wiggled out of his arms and landed on a carpeted floor.

"I guess she hit her head or something and that's when she started making funny breathing noises," Mata said to the detective, who came to the house after learning the baby had severe brain injuries.

Kent County medical examiner Dr. David Start examined Lucretia's body and said she had acceleration/deceleration injuries typical of a car crash or a fall from several stories.

Start testified there was no way that a slight shaking or a drop from a height of a few feet could have caused the brain-scrambling injury that killed the baby.

"This is not an accidental type of injury," Start said Wednesday.

During the interview, when Adams told Mata there was no way his story added up, Mata erupted in sobs.

"I don't want to go to jail," he whimpered. But he denied shaking the girl.

Minutes later, Mata said he dropped the girl, then propped her up to watch TV until she started wailing again.

He said he then grabbed her arms as she lay on the floor and shook her.

"Just a little (shake)," he said. "I didn't do it too bad. She was crying and she had a wet diaper and I didn't, you know, mean to shake her too bad."

Mata's attorney, Jeffrey O'Hara, is basing his defense on the argument that the girl's injuries were unintentional.

Mata did not take the stand in his defense, which offered no witnesses. Today closing arguments are to be heard, with the jury deciding Mata's fate after that.

During two days of testimony, Judge Donald Johnston's courtroom has been filled with family and supporters of Teunis on one side and Mata on the other. Mata has been withdrawn throughout the trial, rarely looking up from the floor.

"I'm real sorry," Mata wrote in a statement for police. "I don't want to go to jail for something dumb."

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Thursday, April 24, 2008

## Fugitive in Peru faces extradition to Oakland in child sex case

Catherine Jun and Mark Hicks / The Detroit News

**BIRMINGHAM** -- The husband of a longtime youth soccer organizer in Oakland County was arrested Tuesday in Peru and is awaiting extradition to Michigan on molestation charges involving a young boy, Birmingham police said Wednesday.

Claudio Luigi Caffelli, 26, was arrested by the Peruvian National Police/Interpol in Lima on a warrant issued by the Oakland County Prosecutor's Office in October 2006 for three counts of first-degree criminal sexual conduct.

Caffelli is the husband of Genevieve Caffelli, a longtime Bloomfield Hills resident who ran after-school youth sports programs for more than two decades around the county, and once served as coach for the Birmingham/Bloomfield Flag Football League.

Birmingham police say Claudio Caffelli fled to Peru before he could be arraigned.

Along with the Peruvian authorities, Birmingham police worked in conjunction with the U.S. State Department, local FBI office and U.S. Customs to locate Caffelli, police said Wednesday.

Charlie Langton, an attorney for Caffelli, said his client had cooperated with investigators.

Attorneys in Peru, where Caffelli has family, are handling the case, Langton said, and it is unclear when he could return to the United States.



Langton said the boy's mother, a longtime friend of Genevieve Caffelli, had told police about alleged incidents occurring between fall 2005 and fall 2006.

She would drop the boy off for the Caffellis to baby-sit, Langton said. There was "a great relationship with the child," he said. "There were no problems."

Claudio Caffelli had coached sports teams for several years, but the boy was not on one of them, Langton said.

"He was well-liked," Langton said of Caffelli, adding that the allegations were "a shock to everyone who knew" him.

You can reach Catherine Jun at (248) 647-7429 or [cjun@detnews.com](mailto:cjun@detnews.com).



# THE BAY CITY TIMES

## 'Day of Silence' is talk of the town in Clare

Thursday, April 24, 2008

By Tom Gilchrist

[tgilchrist@bc-times.com](mailto:tgilchrist@bc-times.com) | 894-9649

CLARE - Some Clare High School students plan to wear red and keep quiet on Friday's "Day of Silence," meant to protest bullying of gays and lesbians.

Clare County residents, however, are far from mum.

"I'm not in favor of the way this event's being presented," said Rev. Darryl Harless, pastor of the Clare Assembly of God.

"It has nothing to do with bullying, but with bullying of homosexuals - being teased due to your sexual preference," Harless said.

"I can't condone any type of bullying, but we don't condone homosexuality. We've taught our children the values from scripture."

Clare Public School District officials emphasize the district neither recognizes nor endorses the "Day of Silence," sponsored by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network based in New York City.

The event at Clare High School "isn't about homosexuals at all," said Greg McMillan, Clare district superintendent.

"It's about anyone who has been bullied, it's about kids coming to our school and every public school and facing bullying," McMillan said.

Megan Walters, 17, a Clare High senior who said she joined with two other students to ask the district to allow the "Day of Silence," said students can show support by wearing red on Friday.

"The Day of Silence promotes tolerance and it's against harassment of anyone, for any reason, but it's mainly about your sexual orientation and your sexual identity," Walters said.

Walters said she plans to remain quiet from the start of school at 8:15 a.m. until the end of the school day at 3:09 p.m.

Students who need to speak to ask questions in order to understand a subject should do so, Walters said.

"If it's necessary and you need to participate for your class, we want you to speak," Walters said.

About 200 people attended Monday's Clare Board of Education meeting, speaking for and against the "Day of Silence," first observed by Clare High students last year.

"One minister spoke and he said the Bible says that people who are homosexuals all are sinners," McMillan, the Clare superintendent, told The Times.

"I'm sorry, but if that's a Christian, that's not what I want to be, because I don't judge people based on that," McMillan said.

Pastor Jim Shuster, 43, of Northwoods Baptist Church near Clare, said he made that statement at the

meeting. Homosexuality is clearly defined as sin in several places in the Bible, according to Shuster.

Shuster said the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network, posing as a "victim of society," is "definitely promoting tolerance of the homosexual agenda" by promoting a "Day of Silence" in schools.

"How can we allow something like this to come in to our publicly funded school system?" Shuster said. "If we allow this to happen, we're legitimizing sin in our schools.

"It's no different than bringing a drug dealer in the schools and letting him tell his propaganda."

Some Clare residents, though, said they were impressed by the opinions expressed by Megan Walters and two other Clare students - Danielle VanMarter and Gayla Back - at Monday's school board meeting.

"They were intelligent and articulate," said Jill Ouellette, a 41-year-old Clare resident attending the meeting.

"They did research, they prepared before they spoke, and they spoke in a very intimidating environment, because a lot of people were against this event," Ouellette said.

Megan Walters said Clare school officials won't allow students to hang posters in hallways or hand out "speech cards" promoting the "Day of Silence" or its purpose.

"I've spoken with a lawyer about this, and we have a right to carry a piece of paper that tells why I'm doing what I'm doing that day," Walters said.

"If people want to know why we're doing it, I'll hand that paper to them."

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## Muskegon Chronicle

### Blues concert to benefit Bosse centers

Thursday, April 24, 2008

#### FROM LOCAL REPORTS

A benefit blues concert Sunday is designed to help improve the lives of children and families in West Michigan.

The first Beat'n the Blues benefit concert will be 1-10 p.m. Sunday at River City Slims, 243 Commerce, in downtown Grand Rapids. A \$10 donation will be collected at the door to raise money for two area children's advocacy centers, The Andre Bosse Centers, serving children in Lake, Mason, Newaygo and Oceana counties, and the Children's Assessment Center of Kent County.

Both nonprofit organizations work with area law enforcement agencies, the courts and the state Department of Human Services to reduce trauma to child victims of physical and sexual abuse during the investigative process and to provide support to the family and help the child start to heal.

Six regional bands will take the stage for 45-minute sets leading up to the headliner, Nora Jean Bruso. Bruso hails from the Mississippi Delta but honed her craft in Chicago, a renown blues center. Bruso's big break came when Jimmy Dawkins saw her perform in 1976 and asked her to join his band. Dawkins has been quoted saying, "Nora Jean is the greatest female blues vocalist of her generation. She may very well become the next queen of the blues."

This year, The Blues Foundation nominated Bruso in the category of Best Female Blues Vocalist.

The benefit concert was developed by musician Dan Luttrell, Andre Bosse's uncle, as a legacy for his neice. Volunteers secured sponsorships to underwrite any costs, booked the bands and publicity.

For more information, visit [www.andrebossecenter.org](http://www.andrebossecenter.org) or call (231) 845-0506.

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## THE ANN ARBOR NEWS

### 2 teens held for assault on 6th-grader

Victim suffers broken jaw; police say 8th-grade boys attacked him without provocation

Thursday, April 24, 2008

**BY SUSAN L. OPPAT**

**The Ann Arbor News**

Two eighth-graders at Ypsilanti's East Middle School are facing charges that they broke the jaw of a sixth-grader for no apparent reason last Friday.

Ypsilanti Police Chief Matt Harshberger said one teen was arrested Wednesday morning and was expected to appear in court within 24 hours for a detention hearing.

The other boy's mother turned him into police

this morning, and he was

being taken to the juvenile

detention center, Harshberger said.

Harshberger said neither boy had been suspended from school because the incident happened several hours after school at Prospect Park, and not at the school. But Harshberger said he ordered the arrest of both suspects Wednesday morning because at least one witness to the assault said the suspects threatened him.

Harshberger said the victim and witnesses said the older boys attacked the younger boy without

provocation. But the eighth-graders told police the younger boy had called them a name.

The victim was admitted to the University of Michigan Medical Center with a jaw broken in several places and a severe laceration, Harshberger said. He has since been released.

Harshberger said the boy arrested Wednesday was taken into custody at

the school, but the other boy was not in school Wednesday.

Susan Oppat can be reached at [soppat@annarbornnews.com](mailto:soppat@annarbornnews.com) or 734-482-1166.

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April 23, 2008

## **HOUSE JUDICIARY APPROVES G.P.S. FOR STALKERS, DOMESTIC OFFENDERS**

Although only one of two bills approved on Wednesday by a House committee mandates that judges put paroled offenders on global positioning monitoring, proponents of legislation said the permissive bill will encourage more judges to add GPS tethers to the conditions of release in cases of domestic abuse while still giving them discretion to decide the best course of action for each case.

[Rep. Mark Meadows](#) (D-East Lansing) said he thinks that, like [HB 4330](#), which mandates that aggravated stalkers should be paroled with a GPS, [HB 4453](#) should also include a mandate to use the monitors in domestic abuse cases, instead of simply offering permission.

He said the mandate would be acceptable to both sides in a case because it doesn't seem to be a violation of the accused's civil liberties, and, most importantly, the technology would ensure that victims are protected.

Judiciary Committee Chair [Rep. Paul Condino](#) (D-Southfield), sponsor of HB 4330, said that he made that bill mandatory because it seems a more "cut and dry" issue of aggravated stalking and releasing someone on parole with the monitor.

However, in the case of the domestic violence bill, there is a wide range of times at which a judge might order a GPS monitor, he said, for instance, during a bond hearing awaiting sentencing or during a hearing for a personal protection order.

To further complicate the issue, Mr. Condino said, he learned from domestic violence victims' advocates that mandatory monitoring could actually work against their goal of getting victims to come forward about abuse if victims aren't sure they want their loved one to be placed on the monitor.

Because of concerns of advocates, Mr. Condino said, he opted to make the bill permissive, and for the same reason, also added a substitute that asks for more input and permission from the victim before ordering a GPS tether.



April 22, 2008

## EVE, Inc. thanks all our volunteers for their dedication and support

*Jillian Pastoor*  
*Reader Submitted*

EVE, Inc. (End Violent Encounters), Ingham County's domestic violence shelter, values volunteer involvement. Volunteers are a part of the EVE, Inc. team and are important to the success of many of EVE's programs for survivors of domestic violence. In 2007, 228 volunteers provided nearly 9,000 hours of service. Volunteers work in a multitude of different capacities ensuring a diverse experience.

Volunteers working directly with survivors of domestic violence complete an intensive volunteer training where they will interact with experts in the community to better understand the dynamics of domestic violence. The training, a collaboration of EVE, MSU Safe Place, and CARE provides volunteers with information and resources to guide their volunteer experience and is scheduled three times a year (Summer, Spring, and Fall) to accommodate volunteer needs.

EVE Inc.'s annual golf outing and auction, are two more fun ways to get involved. Dedicated volunteers work to raise funds and increase awareness for EVE's programs and services by joining the event committee or volunteering the day of the event. Event planning volunteers can also work with the Community Development Director to create and coordinate additional events to raise awareness and secure support.

The Friends of EVE program provides yet another opportunity for community members to show their support for survivors. Friends gather to discuss ways in which they can increase community awareness about domestic violence as well as secure funding for EVE's much-needed services. Individuals can also get involved by joining EVE's Board of Directors.

There are many ways to get involved whether it is for an hour, a day, a month, or years. Visit us online at [www.eveinc.org](http://www.eveinc.org) to find out how you can support survivors of domestic violence in Ingham County or call us at 517-372-5976 and talk to a staff member about volunteering. EVE is grateful for the support of all our volunteers and appreciates their dedication to end violent encounters in our community.

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## Health care topic of meeting

Thursday, April 24, 2008

By Kristin Longley  
klongley@citpat.com -- 768-4917

Between 12,000 and 16,000 people in Jackson County do not have health insurance, a Foote Health Systems case manager said.

That's one reason state Sen. Mark Schauer conducted a town hall meeting Wednesday to help educate the community about Jackson County's health-care resources.

Schauer, D-Battle Creek, said the ``health-care crisis" is bankrupting consumers and making businesses less competitive. Schauer is campaigning this year to unseat U.S. Rep. Tim Walberg, R-Tipton, in the 7th District, which includes Jackson County.

A panel of health-care leaders at the meeting at LifeWays urged the public to take advantage of local providers. Among the panelists were representatives from Foote, Project Access and the Center for Family Health.

Project Access, a partnership among leaders of the medical community, has 254 patients enrolled, but has room for 500, coordinator Kristin Pluta said.

The organization's mission is to provide free health care to low-income adults who don't have insurance and don't qualify for public assistance.

The Center for Family Health, a local nonprofit that has five Jackson County locations, had 110,000 visits last year. The group helps patients with a range of insurances, including the uninsured.

``You really need to applaud the health-care leaders in your community," Ted Westmeier, Jackson County health officer, said of the panelists. ``But they're still under very significant challenges."

The panelists also asked the more than 20 attendees to urge legislators to make affordable, accessible health care more of a priority.



Representatives from the Health Care for Michigan campaign discussed a ballot initiative to amend the state constitution to force legislators to work on health-care reform.

Schauer said he supports the initiative, for which supporters are still gathering signatures, and also signed on with a similar effort at the national level on the Web site [www.dividedwefail.org](http://www.dividedwefail.org).

Several audience members voiced frustration with the U.S. health-care system, and others debated the merits of a universal health-care system.

“It was fun, and I enjoyed the discussion,” Mark Wolin of Jackson said.

“But it's a problem without a solution. It's just something we're going to have to deal with.”



## THE ANN ARBOR NEWS

### Children's health fair highlights a key need Some may be eligible for insurance help

Thursday, April 24, 2008

Amid prosperity, there always are needs, although too often they are hidden from sight.

In this case, the need is shared by an estimated 11 percent of Washtenaw County residents who lack health insurance, and that places them at risk.

Too often, the lack of coverage means reduced or little preventive care, and that translates into health problems and costly solutions that could be avoided or trimmed if everyone had access to adequate health care.

The 11 percent number is, at best, an estimate drawn from data four years ago. There is no estimate for children in our county who also lack health insurance, although that number is pegged between 5 and 6 percent for kids statewide.

Washtenaw County is highlighting that need with a Children's Health and Enrollment Fair from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Tuesday at 555 Towner St. in Ypsilanti.

The event will have health screenings for children, and eligible children will be enrolled in state and federal insurance programs.

People without insurance aren't always aware they're eligible for help. And, children, in particular, need a foundation of good health.

The county's attempt to put a spotlight on this problem is admirable.

You can help by sharing information about this program with friends and colleagues. Preventing even a single child from falling through the bureaucratic cracks is important, and this is an opportunity to act locally while political candidates meander their way through questions about health care.

Questions about health insurance for children or questions about this upcoming program can be directed to Kelly Stupple, Washtenaw County's health insurance advocate at Children's Health Insurance advocate at [stupplek@ewashtenaw.org](mailto:stupplek@ewashtenaw.org).

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# 'Read to Feed' program helps fill food pantry

Posted by [Chad D. Lerch | The Muskegon Chronicle](#)

April 24, 2008 09:37AM



Chronicle/Ken

StevensTwin Lake Elementary third-grade students Hannah Meisch, 9, left and Baylee Babcock, 9, load items into a cart at the Norton Shores Meijer Wednesday morning. Pictured in the background are classmates Micheal Ruano, 8, (with hat) and Hunter O'Neal, 8, and Hunter's mother, Julie O'Neal. They were shopping because they participated in the "Read to Feed" program to raise money for purchasing food to restock the Muskegon Rescue Mission food pantry, where they went after shopping. They spent \$999.4 of the \$1,000 from Meijer and additional \$160 of donations gathered at school.

When teacher Tom Polanyi started a "Read to Feed" project at Twin Lake Elementary School, the goal seemed simple enough.

His third-grade students agreed to read a combined 9,000 minutes at home and their reward would not be self-indulgent.

The students were working for a \$500 donation from the Norton Shores Meijer Inc. store. At stake was an in-store shopping spree for groceries to benefit the Muskegon Rescue Mission.



Chronicle/Ken StevensTwin Lake

Elementary third-grade student Samantha Schalk, 8, reacts to the announcement that Meijer awarded her class an additional \$500 for a "Read to Feed" shopping spree at the Norton Shores Meijer..

The students took their mission seriously. In the end, they nearly doubled their goal. They read for 16,900 minutes.

Mike Veltman, director of the Norton Shores Meijer, was so overwhelmed by the students' efforts that he doubled the donation.

"To our surprise, we got a check for \$1,000," Polanyi said.

They converted that and an earlier food drive into almost two tons of food.

Their efforts came none too soon. Rescue Mission officials said their cupboards were nearly bare because a struggling economy has left many people in need. It's a situation in which many other food pantries find themselves.

Third-grader Samantha Schalk, 8, said reading that much was no big deal and she understands the project's impact. "We helped a lot of lives."

Armed with calculators and carts, the students spread throughout the food section of the Meijer store last week to shop for others. Mentors helped them find the best deals and the calculators helped the kids keep tabs on how much they could spend.



Chronicle/Ken StevensTwin Lake  
Elementary third-grade student Leah Grimm, 9, reaches for a box pancake mix at the Norton Shores Meijer Wednesday morning..

The students filled 15 shopping carts. A food drive at the school prior to the trip filled half a school bus, Polanyi said.

"I've been in education for 28 years and this is one of the top experiences that I've been involved in," Polanyi said. "It's one of those things, you had to be there.

"It was a blast," he said. "Many schools have food drives. But with this one, the kids really understood the impact of it. They had a purpose."

After their shopping spree, they headed for the Rescue Mission to deliver the goods.

The students formed a "fireman's line" from the bus into the Rescue Mission building, passing food hand to hand.

Carla Skoglund, executive director of the Muskegon Rescue Mission, said the students delivered 3,459 pounds of food.

That represents 4,394 items, including soup, canned meat, macaroni and cheese, peanut butter, pasta, canned vegetables, cereal, cake mix and others.

"This is a huge help to us," Skoglund said. "This will carry us for quite a while. We're very pleased with what they did and it gives us a huge boost."



Chronicle/Ken Stevens  
Left to right, Twin Lake Elementary third-grade teacher Tom Polanyi assists students Lauren Jones, 9, Baylee Babcock, 9, Jakob Hicks, 9, and Hunter O'Neal, 8, load items onto the school bus after shopping at the Norton Shores Meijer. .

Skoglund said demand at food pantries is on the rise. Unemployment is up; so are gasoline prices. She said many families are reaching out for help to get through the tough financial times.

"We're definitely feeding more families now. The numbers are way up compared to last year," Skoglund said.

Every summer, food pantries report dramatic donation drop-offs. Last summer, shelves at area food pantries were so bare officials embarked on a public relations campaign asking for help.

Skoglund and other area food pantry officials encourage residents to start giving now to avoid a similar crisis this summer.

Yvonne Ramos, a spokeswoman for the Muskegon Love INC (In the Name of Christ), said West Michigan communities have the reputation of being generous.





Chronicle/Ken

StevensTwin Lake Elementary third-grade students had to ride in a crowded bus to the Muskegon Rescue Mission after shopping at the Norton Shores Meijer.

Ramos said a woman recently came into the Love INC ministry, 2525 Hall, with three cans of food to donate. The woman, who is on a fixed income, told an employee: "I wish I could give more."

Ramos said her pantry needs canned meat, ravioli, soup, pancake mix, syrup, beef stew and macaroni and cheese, to name a few.

"The need is not going away," Ramos said.

Polanyi said his students learned a valuable lesson about giving ... and learning.

"Normally when you go on study trips, it's hard for the students to stay on task," he said. "But with this one, the kids just did a really great job. They were so engaged in every way."

Polanyi said he's already been asked whether he'll do it again next year. "I say, 'I hope so, but hitting 16,000 minutes will be tough.' "



Chronicle/Ken

StevensTwin Lake Elementary third grade students, left to right, Madeline Olsen, 9, Keith Korstanje, 9, McKenna Duram, 9, Hannah Meisch, 9, and Baylee Babcock, 9, unload donated items at the Muskegon Rescue Mission food pantry.





## No washday blues: Project provides laundry services to low-income

BY VANESSA McCRAY

vmccray@record-eagle.com

SUTTONS BAY -- Most of the 15 dryers along the wall of the laundromat whirled and tumbled.

At intervals, they disgorged piles of freshly cleaned clothes and blankets. Surfaces around the Suttons Bay Laundromat toppled with stacks of folded fabrics. On this morning in early April, the place steamed with activity.

The Laundry Project gives low-income families a chance to do their wash for free on certain days here and at two other area laundromats.

"These are the decisions that people have to make: 'Do I put gas in the car, or do I take Johnny's clothes to get washed?'" said M. Egan McGlynn, community resource coordinator with the Grand Traverse/Leelanau Department of Human Services.

McGlynn launched the project because of the number of protective services calls from people who encountered children with lice or smelly clothing. But those problems are not usually due to child abuse or neglect.

"Nine out of 10 times, it is just economics," she said.

The program began in 2004 and now includes three laundromats in Grand Traverse and Leelanau counties. McGlynn is searching for a group to manage the Grand Traverse sites so she can concentrate on the finances. A group of churches or civic organizations would set up the schedule and recruit volunteers to work the sites. She also wants to add more laundry days in Grand Traverse County. The Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council manages the Leelanau sites.

The project operates on donations from churches, individuals and community groups -- not state funds. It served 2,571 people and families during the 2006-2007 season and cost more than \$18,880.

Sites include the Suttons Bay facility, Kardes Self Serve Laundry in Traverse City and West Bay Laundry at the corner of M-72 and M-22. The project is held during the school year from 9-11:45 a.m. on the first and third Wednesdays of the month in Suttons Bay; from 4-7 p.m. on the second Tuesday of the month at Kardes; and from 9 a.m. to noon on the fourth Thursday of the month at West Bay. The final wash day of the season is June 10 at Kardes.

Lyubov Narolska and her mother live in Traverse City and travelled to Suttons Bay recently for the program. The Ukrainian family is large and so are their wash loads.

"Our family has 12 people, so it's a lot," said Narolska.

She translated for her mother as the two talked about the project. Her mother learned about the laundry days through a Head Start program and has utilized the service for about half a year.

"It has really helped us a lot," Narolska said.

Laundromat Manager Bonnie Fillmore estimated about 600 pounds of laundry is washed during one day of the project.

"They bring them in by the truck loads -- pick-up truck loads," she said.

Organizers don't require people to prove their need to use the service. Volunteers offer snacks, dispense soap and walk around with containers of quarters to feed the machines. They also can point participants to community agencies to help with other needs.

Dee Glass sat near a sign-in sheet at the laundromat and said she recognizes the regulars. It's rewarding to work on a project that offers practical support, she said. Glass recalled a girl who came to a laundry day and, upon finishing her wash, buried her nose in the clean clothes to smell the fresh scent.

"She said, 'This is absolutely glorious,'" Glass remembered.

That reaction to such a simple task, made affordable, is not uncommon.

"Most everybody goes out smiling," Glass said.

Groups interested in donating to the project or managing the Grand Traverse sites should contact McGlynn at 929-0153.

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## Photos



Tricia Denton plays with children as their parents take advantage of The Laundry Project. Record-Eagle



Alevandra Garcia and her cousin fold laundry as they participate in The Laundry Project. The Laundry Project is run by the Michigan Department of Human Services Grand Traverse/Leelanau County. The project began in 2004 to help low-income families afford to wash their clothes. People come into the laundromat on scheduled days and are met by volunteers who help them with their laundry and pay for the wash and dry loads. Record-Eagle



Volunteer Bobbie Eggert fills soap containers for the Laundry Project. Record-Eagle

## **Police find stolen dog**

### **Puppy found sleeping in tent with homeless man**

Thursday, April 24, 2008

BY TOM GANTERT

The Ann Arbor News

Ann Arbor Police Officer Brett Hansen thought it was odd when he saw a familiar homeless man downtown carrying a dog for the first time on Tuesday.

Hansen made note of it and headed to see his parents. At their house, he noticed a picture on the front page of The Ann Arbor News of a 3-month-old long-haired Dachshund stolen from the Humane Society of Huron Valley. The dog, whom shelter employees had started calling Aristotle, was still being treated for a health condition when he was stolen Friday night.

"I know that dog," Hansen thought as he looked at the picture.

By the next morning, the 11-year police veteran was able to track down the homeless man and get the dog back - as well as a digital camera that was also taken from the animal shelter. Police say they have little hope of finding \$100 cash taken in the break-in.

Deb Kern from the Humane Society said the puppy was in isolation because he had a skin condition that left sores. The puppy needed to be treated three times, but had only gotten one treatment when he was taken.

Kern said the treatment can now resume. She said the puppy was tired, but appeared to have been fed and was in otherwise good condition.

Hansen found the homeless man, who is in his 20s, by going to a church where he had seen him eating a free meal in the past. The homeless man wasn't there, but Hansen asked around and learned where the man was staying in a tent.

Hansen went to the tent off South Industrial Drive and found the man inside with the dog, which was sleeping. Hansen said the man had the stolen digital camera in his backpack, as well as dog food.

The man was arrested and is jailed awaiting charges on receiving and concealing stolen property, police said.

The police officer said the homeless man was calling the dog "Soldier."

Tanya Hilgendorf, executive director of the Humane Society, said she hopes the puppy can be adopted within the next few weeks.

News Reporter Susan Oppat also contributed to this report. Tom Gantert can be reached at [tgantert@annarbornews.com](mailto:tgantert@annarbornews.com) or 734-994-6701.

# Mackinac Center for Public Policy

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Posted: Apr. 23, 2008

## Mackinac Center's "Show Michigan the Money" Project Prompts Michigan Department of State to Post Unprecedented Detail in Department Spending

Center's transparency effort turns next to state departments that appeared to violate constitution in 2006

**For Immediate Release  
Wednesday, April 23, 2008**

Contact:  
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MIDLAND — In response to an inquiry from the Midland-based Mackinac Center for Public Policy, the Michigan Department of State announced today it would begin quarterly posting on the Internet of [detailed reports of the department's expenditures](#). The Mackinac Center's request to the department was part of the Center's new "Show Michigan the Money" Project (see [www.showmichiganthemoney.org](http://www.showmichiganthemoney.org)), an initiative to encourage state and local governments to make their checkbook spending directly available to the public.

"The office of Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land has opened its books to Michigan taxpayers to an unprecedented degree for a state agency in Michigan," said Kenneth M. Braun, the Mackinac Center policy analyst in charge of the Show Michigan the Money Project. "She's placed online the department's payments to the penny for everything from building leases to safety equipment."

"I commend the Mackinac Center for its commitment to government accountability and taxpayer rights," Land said. "The Department of State is proud of its stewardship of tax dollars and is pleased to take a leadership role in this cutting-edge initiative."

The Center's Show Michigan the Money Project was initiated on March 13, 2008, with the announcement of the "[School Checkbook Transparency Project](#)," which aims to open up the check registers of Michigan's public school districts and place them in accessible and comprehensible form on the Internet. The Center has also made available the collective bargaining contracts for every Michigan school district and other key transparency projects as part of its [www.MichiganTransparency.org](http://www.MichiganTransparency.org) Web site.

The Center chose to approach the Secretary of State's office before contacting other state departments because, as Braun noted: "This department has a diverse mission, handling everything from boat trailer license plates to campaign finance violations. If they can open up their expenditures, other state departments should be able to do the same." Braun also acknowledged efforts by other Michigan agencies to improve transparency, including the online checkbooks posted by the Montrose Community Schools and the St. Clair County Regional Educational Service Agency, as well as the first steps taken toward spending transparency by the Michigan Office of the Attorney General.

The Center will seek to persuade other state departments to follow the Secretary of State's example, starting with the Michigan State Police, Department of Human Services and Department of Corrections, each of which appeared to violate the state constitution in 2006 by overspending their budgets.

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